

WWF New York City House Show – September 22, 1984: Welcome To The Family

WWF House Show

Date: September 22, 1984

Location: Madison Square Garden, New York City, New York

Attendance: 19,000

Commentators: Gene Okerlund, Gorilla Monsoon

It's another MSG house show from 1984, meaning Hulkamania is here but not to the level it would ultimately reach. The champ is in the house tonight and defending the title against one of his biggest rivals of the time: Big John Studd. Other than that there isn't much to see here, but that's how a lot of house shows were back in the day. Let's get to it.

Gene and Gorilla welcome us to the show.

Salvatore Bellomo vs. Brutus Beefcake

This is Beefcake's MSG debut and he's actually billed from Parts Unknown. We're also told that Jesse Ventura is in the hospital in San Diego, meaning he won't be here to face Hogan. Big John Studd will be challenging Hogan instead. After a brief stall to get us going, Beefcake shoves him down and then into the corner for good measure. Bellomo gets nowhere on a headlock so he dropkicks Beefcake down and hooks an armdrag as well.

Beefcake walks around a bit as more stalling ensues. Back to the headlock as we hit the mat early on. Gene wants to know if Beefcake's mother knows she has a son named Brutus Beefcake. You mean there isn't a Mama Beefcake? Bellomo speeds things up with a leapfrog and a reverse dropkick to stagger Brutus a bit. Beefcake snaps off a headbutt to send Salvatore

down and the slow offense continues. To be fair though this was far more common in 1984.

Off to a neck crank as Gorilla isn't thrilled with the refereeing job so far. A back body drop puts Sal down again and the ropes look very loose out there. Brutus goes after the back with a slam and some headbutts to the back for two. Some knees to the jaw get two for Brutus as Gorilla is complaining about what looks like metal on Beefcake's arms. Bellomo fights up with some solid right hands and a dropkick to send Brutus to the floor. Back in and Brutus pounds away very slowly by knocking Bellomo into the corner. A cross body is caught in mid air into a powerslam by Beefcake for the pin.

Rating: D+. I've seen WAY worse debuts for people but it didn't do much for me here. Brutus didn't look lost but he looked very limited with what he could do out there. You can only watch so many forearms to the back and knee chokes before you get bored you know? Not terrible here but cutting out three or four minutes would have helped a lot.

Chief Jay Strongbow vs. Nikolai Volkoff

Nikolai sings before the match and Jay seems ok with it. The referee tells them the rules which you never see anymore as I guess it's a waste of time now. I would however pay a good deal of money for an official WWE rule book given how much it changes at times. Strongbow pounds away in the corner to start and we have a standoff. Off to an armbar by Jay and into a hammerlock before he fires off some basic strikes to the ample gut of Volkoff.

Nikolai shoves him into the corner and puts on a nerve hold, as apparently they need a breather after three and a half minutes of "action". Jay tries to get on the warpath, only to be pulled right back down by the hair. The referee catches it and Gene actually applauds him for getting one right. Back to the nerve hold for a bit longer before Strongbow gets up and goes on the warpath with some knee lifts. The path

continues until as Nikolai pounds on the back until it's off to Strongbow's sleeper. Volkoff rams him back first into the buckle to escape and drops an elbow for the pin.

Rating: D-. This match wasn't even seven minutes long and nearly two minutes of it was spent in a nerve hold. Strongbow was long past the point of being worth much here other than a nostalgia pop, which makes for some very dull matches. This wasn't much to see and Volkoff never would get much better in the ring.

SD Jones vs. Dave Schultz

Schultz is a pretty decent heel who would have his career cut short by being an idiot and attacking a news reporter asking him if wrestling was fake. He backs away from Jones in the corner before taking it to the mat with a headlock. Jones puts on a body vice but gets punched in the face and choked for his efforts. They get back up and Schultz slaps Jones in the face like the villain he is.

Back to the mat with Jones taking over via a headscissors until Schultz makes the ropes. Now Jones slaps Schultz and pounds away, only to have Dave kick him in the face to take over. A clothesline gets two for Schultz and it's off to a chinlock on SD. Jones fights up and gets two off a headbutt but Schultz sends him and hits....it was some kind of a kick to the head. Either way it gets the pin in a very awkward count as the referee counted two, stopped, and then counted three. Even Schultz seems annoyed that he won that fast.

Rating: D+. Jones is another guy who wasn't very good but was popular enough back in the day to warrant keeping a job. Schultz was fine for a quick challenger to Hogan but soon after this he would be gone due to the reasons mentioned above. The match was nothing though and the ending seemed like it wasn't what was planned.

Greg Valentine vs. Jose Luis Rivera

Rivera jumps Valentine as he's taking his robe off, sending Greg out to the floor. Back in and Valentine misses a charge into the corner but Jose doesn't follow him in. Instead it's a forearm to the face to take Jose down, allowing Greg to stomp on the leg as is his custom. A gutbuster puts Rivera down again and there's an elbow drop to the thigh. Rivera is thrown to the floor as we're firmly in squash territory here.

Back in and a shoulder breaker gets two for Valentine and it's off to an armbar. Another forearm puts Rivera on the floor as Valentine is just toying with him here. Rivera comes back with some right hands, only to be knocked across the ring with a single forearm. Valentine lifts him up and drops Jose ribs first across the top rope before walking around for a bit. Rivera pounds on him in the corner but a single right hand drops him again. A suplex puts Rivera down and there are some of the heavy elbow drops from the Hammer. Figure Four goes on Rivera and we're done.

Rating: D+. Just an extended squash here but at least it wasn't all that long. Valentine was still a big deal at this point and he would have one last run with the Intercontinental Title soon after this. Rivera was your traditional ethnic guy who wasn't all that great but he could fill in a spot on the card like this.

WWF World Title: Big John Studd vs. Hulk Hogan

Here's your famous debut as Studd has a manager with him: Bobby the Brain Heenan. We get a prerecorded comment from him as he brags about leaving with the title in his first night here. It's still Eye of the Tiger and the white trunks for Hogan which are always cool to see here. Hogan apparently cut himself on the chest during his entrance. Studd immediately heads to the apron for a meeting with Heenan as Gene warns us about what Bobby is capable of doing.

Studd takes over with a test of strength so Hulk goes with good old fashioned right hands. A running elbow in the corner has Studd on the apron and the match slows back down again. Back in and Hogan hits a big

boot to the face but can't slam Studd, which apparently would get him \$10,000. Studd easily slams Hulk down and hits a middle rope forearm to the back. Off to a bearhug but Hogan holds his arm up after two drops, only to be sent into the ropes and knocked down by a big shoulder.

Studd circles the champ and hits a very slow ax handle to the back before we hit another bearhug. Hogan appears to be either dancing or shaking while in the hold but he gets his arm down inside Studd's grip to break the hold. He can't follow up though and Studd knocks him out to the floor. The champion is cut open and Studd pounds him from the apron, only to have Hogan come back in and pound away as is his custom. Studd is pounded down but Hogan still can't slam him. They head to the floor and Hogan still can't slam him, so Studd shoves him into the post and slides back in for the countout win.

Rating: D+. This was to set up a rematch and nothing more. Obviously you can't change the title here or anything like that, but the idea of having Hogan not be able to slam him is nothing more than a way to set up a rematch a month later where he can pull the slam off. Other than that though, this was really dull stuff, but that's par for the course for Studd most of the time.

Heenan and Studd runs off with the belt. Oh yeah it's a rematch next month.

Ken Patera vs. Rick McGraw

Patera is a strong man with blonde hair here. We stall for over a minute while Patera takes off his warmup gear. Patera shoves him around to start but gets caught in a headlock. It's about as exciting as it sounds so Ken takes him down with an armbar. McGraw grabs a hammerlock but again we go to the ropes. Very slow paced stuff so far. Off to a leg lock by Patera as this is somehow getting even worse. The leg is wrapped around the post and a big right hand puts McGraw on the floor. Rick pulls him down to the mat and wraps Patera's leg around the post a few times. Back in and

McGraw chokes a lot but gets clotheslined down and sent into the post. The full nelson ends McGraw pretty easily.

Rating: D-. Absolutely horrendous match here as Patera did next to nothing for the eight minutes that this went on. Yeah that whole description filled in just under eight minutes. This was horrible all around but I'd bet it was a filler after intermission for the sake of a concession stand run. Nothing to see here at all.

Adrian Adonis/Dick Murdoch/Lou Albano vs. Sgt. Slaughter/Wild Samoans

Before the match Albano says that this is due to him being accused of being a biased referee against the Samoans and the Sarge. Adonis and Murdoch are tag champions. Albano sneaks in a foreign object because that's what he does. After a LONG stall we're ready for the opening bell. We finally start with Afa vs. Murdoch and they trade full nelsons. It must drive Murdoch nuts to be in there against Afa as Murdoch was a member of the KKK.

That goes nowhere so here's Adonis instead. Everything breaks down and Albano walks out like the coward he is, leaving this as a handicap match. Slaughter chases after him but comes back a few seconds later. The tag champions try to ram the Samoans' heads together which has as little effect as you would expect it to have. Albano is back at ringside as we've barely had any wrestling in the first five minutes.

Adonis and Murdoch double team Sika until Albano comes in for some shots with that foreign object. Sika snaps up and it's very quickly off to Murdoch again as we're firmly in a comedy match at this point. Dick tries the elbow to the head and injures himself in the process. The tag champions are rammed together and Murdoch gets caught in the wrong corner. Albano is offered a chance to come in and says no way. He claims to have a bad back and sends Adonis in to face Sika.

Actually make that Sarge to a big pop and a knee drop to Adonis' head.

Murdoch is knocked to the floor as well but Slaughter goes after Albano, allowing the heels to take Slaughter down. Murdoch hits Slaughter with something from the announce table and Gorilla is freaking out. Back in and Adonis puts on a sleeper but the Samoans make the save. Off to more triple teaming in the corner and a back elbow to the face for two for Murdoch.

Adonis comes back in with a top rope elbow for two before Dick comes in to rip at Slaughter's face. Slaughter finally gets in a shot to the face and it's off to Sika who is dropped with a double back elbow from the champions. Albano comes in for some cheap shots but once again Sika snaps up and Lou runs away. Sika gets in a headbutt on Murdoch and it's off to Afa. Not that the tag means much though as he is caught in a front facelock by Murdoch.

Adrian slams Sika down for two and hits a missile dropkick (a high spot in this era) for two. A top rope splash misses Afa but Murdoch breaks up a tag attempt. Afa gets in a big headbutt and it's off to Slaughter as everything breaks down. Adonis gets tied up in the ropes so Sika and Slaughter pick up Murdoch and harpoons him into Adonis' chest. A dropkick gets one for Slaughter and there are some headbutts by Sika.

Adonis breaks up a near fall and it's back to Afa. Adrian gets a tag but walks into a bunch of headbutts to put him right back down. Slaughter rams Murdoch's head into Sika's and it's off to Albano vs. Sarge. The Cobra Clutch is quickly put on but Adonis makes the save. Lou brings in the exhausted Murdoch as Sarge and Albano leave. Everything breaks down and Sarge runs in to slam Murdoch off the top for the pin.

Rating: C. This took awhile to get into but once it got going things improved a lot. The story makes sense as the tag champions can hang with the Samoans in a two on two match but when you give them Slaughter against the worthless Albano, Murdoch and Adonis are outmatched. It's too long at 20 minutes but it's not as bad as I was expecting it to be.

Mike Sharpe vs. B. Brian Blair

Before the match, Sharpe complains about not being introduced as Canada's Greatest Athlete. Blair is still just a guy in trunks at this point. Sharpe bails to the floor right after the bell and hides on the apron when Blair wants to get going. Mike finally pulls him down and rams Blair into the announce table before we get more stalling. Back in and Blair finally gets in a shot on the leg before wrapping it around the post.

Both guys miss elbow drops and Sharpe is still talking trash. Blair puts on a wristlock but Sharpe goes to the eyes to break it up. A sunset flip out of the corner gets two for Blair and it's back to the wristlock. Make that an armbar as the workrate really goes up. Sharpe puts on a headlock on the mat before running Blair over with some shoulders. Brian comes back with some dropkicks and armdrags to send Mike out to the floor. Back to the armbar as this long match gets even longer.

Sharpe gets up and backdrops him down for two before sending Blair throat first into the top rope. A splash gets two and it's off to an over the shoulder backbreaker. Mike throws him through the ropes but not even out to the apron. Off to a Boston Crab but Mike isn't putting anywhere near the amount of pressure on it that he needs to have. Blair finally kicks him off but gets placed in the corner and punched in the face.

Gene and Gorilla complain about how nothing has happened yet as Blair comes back with a running forearm to the head. A missile dropkick puts Sharpe down and some right hands do the same. Sharpe is sent to the floor and we can see the timekeeper touching his nose, meaning to go home. Back in and Sharpe pounds away in the corner before shoving the referee for the DQ.

Rating: F+. This wasn't a bad match but good freaking grief was it ever dull. It was nearly twenty minutes of two guys that no one cared about doing nothing of note at all. Even Gene and Gorilla were complaining about how dull the match was so apparently it wasn't just me who thought

this match was boring. It's not the guys' fault though as they just had no business wrestling a twenty minute match.

We get the card for next month's show, which I'll get to eventually. It's Tito vs. Valentine for the IC Title if nothing else. Before Fink is done though, here's Bobby Heenan with something to say. He's never heard of a title not changing hands on a countout, so if Hogan wants a rematch there's a contract ready right now. However, Heenan wants it to be a countout can change the title and calls Hogan out to sign it. Cue Hogan to sign it in a pencil and that's about it.

Pat Patterson vs. Kamala

This is your main event people and I believe it's Patterson's last match as a regular competitor. Kamala jumps Patterson before Pat gets his jacket off and pounds on him in the corner. Pat finally gets out of it and pokes Kamala in the eyes before stupidly trying a slam. A shot to the face ticks Kamala off but Patterson bails to the floor before pain can be inflicted. Back in and Kamala wants a test of strength but Patterson stomps on his bare feet in a smart move. Kamala shoves him down and pounds away but can't hit the splash. Scratch that as it hits Patterson on the back for the fast pin.

Rating: D. Another uninteresting match here but at least it makes Kamala look good. Patterson was WAY past his expiration date here but at least the fans still liked him. He was much better in the ring than people remember but soon after this he would move into the backstage position that he's most famous for.

We go to the back to hear Chief Jay Strongbow say that he isn't sure how much longer he can do this given how strong all the new guys are. He also thinks Hulk made a big mistake by signing that contract.

Overall Rating: D-. This was insanely boring with almost nothing interesting at all. The matches weren't even bad for the most part but

they were just so freaking dull that it made a two hour and twenty minute show feel about five times that long. There's nothing worth watching on here but next month's show should be much better given the card announced.

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All-American Wrestling – February 24, 1985: Bret's MSG Debut – It Sucks

All-American Wrestling

Date: February 24, 1985

Commentators: Vince McMahon, Bruno Sammartino, Jesse Ventura

This is another one of those shows that I have a fair few episodes of from this era. This is one of WWF's weekend shows and I think it ran on Sunday mornings. It was one of their bigger shows and it ran nationally. We're about 5 weeks from Wrestlemania and this is the six days after the War To Settle The Score, so this is probably going to be talking about Hogan vs. Piper. Let's get to it.

By the way, this is one of those shows that shows clips from everywhere so no location listed.

Terry Gibbs/Carl Fury vs. Junkyard Dog/Tony Atlas

Atlas and Gibbs start us off and Atlas easily breaks a full

nelson. Both jobbers are easily thrown around and here's JYD. He throws Fury around for a bit before turning it back over to Atlas. Gorilla press and a splash end this. On a level of squashes, this was pretty squashy.

Off to Gene in the Control Center who says what's coming.

UPDATE! With Alfred Hayes!

This one is about the Lady's Championship as Lelani Kai beat Wendi Richter recently. We get a clip of Moolah beating up Richter during a promo. Richter is going to use her return clause. That would be at Wrestlemania.

Pete Pompeii vs. The Spoiler

There's no referee. Spoiler is a masked guy with Johnny V as his manager. Johnny is taking pictures during the match. This is in Ontario. It's another squash with Pompeii getting in some small offense but nothing that makes any real difference. Spoiler wins with the Claw.

Lou Albano is freshly face and has been raising money with Cyndi Lauper for charity. However he wants to talk about his fifteenth team to be champions. He brings in Mike Rotundo and Barry Windham who he SWEARS is the best team they've ever seen.

Gene says this is our feature match.

Bret Hart vs. Rene Goulet

This is Bret's MSG debut and he's just a kid in black and red trunks. Bret takes him down to the mat with a headlock and then does the same with an armbar. Goulet gets in a knee to the ribs to break that up and hooks a bearhug. Goulet bites Bret a lot and shoves him onto the announce table. Now it's a claw hold which Bret eventually breaks up. A slam gets two for Goulet.

Bret grabs a sunset flip out of nowhere for two. Rene is your traditional pompous Frenchman and plays to the crowd as rudely as he could. Off to a chinlock and then the Claw again because once wasn't enough. Bret gets knocked to the floor and Goulet poses on the ropes. Hart comes back in with a sunset flip that had the crowd very excited. Here's Bret's comeback with an atomic drop and abdominal stretch. There's the backbreaker and a legdrop.

Goulet rams him into the corner and pulls out a foreign object from his tights. Bret grabs a sleeper (his finisher apparently, which Gene calls a Singapore Sleeper which is a new one on me) and it gets the win for Bret. Goulet still has the object (can you really call it foreign with him?) after the match.

Rating: D. Bret is one of the best ever but he needs more than this to work with. Goulet was really boring and was usually just there to put over young guys like Bret or Hillbilly Jim. When you use the same rest hold multiple times, you can usually tell that a guy isn't anything special. Boring match but the fans liked Bret.

Time for the Pit!

The guests are Mr. Fuji and Jim Neidhart. That's a unique pairing. Fuji says he's sorry Muraco isn't here tonight. Apparently Fuji is managing Neidhart. That must have been pretty short lived. Anvil introduces himself and Piper says he loves them. That's it.

Iron Sheik/Nikolai Volkoff vs. Aldo Marino/Tony Garea

Garea has seen better days. The evil foreigners (as opposed to the nice foreigners) do their singing and IRAN NUMBER ONE RUSSIA NUMBER ONE thing. Garea vs. Sheik starts things off. After about 50 seconds we get contact in the form of a Garea headlock. The fans are freaking over Garea hurting Sheik. Off to Aldo who keeps up the headlocking. Volkoff gets in a boot

though and the bad guys take over. Belly to back suplex kills Marino and it's off to Volkoff. He piledrives Marino and the gorilla press backbreaker ends this massacre.

Rating: D. Garea was so fun to watch back in the day but his prime was about five years before this. Not much to see here but it was a squash near the end of a show so there's only so much criticism you can give it. Boring match and it was just barely long enough to rate, which is very pesky.

Fuji says he's beautiful and successful. He and Muraco communicate with their minds. Muraco pops up and shouts BANZAI. He's got the Asiatic Spike now. Muraco sounds high as a kite and says they're both evil.

Overall Rating: D. I can't say it's good because they're all over the place with this show. Literally as they were in about 4 different arenas. This is another in the pile of WWF shows that has a random assortment of matches, most of which aren't any good. Bret's debut in MSG is cool to see but other than that, not unless you're a big fan of this time period.

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